

Amendments to the Drawings:

Attached are sheets replacing all the drawings currently on file. Sheets 1 -8, containing Figures 1 -3C are attached at the Appendix, and replace original sheets 1 - 8.

Line weights and font sizes have been increased in all the drawings.

The attached sheets include amendments to Figures 1A, 1C and 1D as detailed below:

In Figure 1A inventory-commence message 200 and inventory agent 300, and arrows indicating data flow, have been added, as described in the specification.

In Figures 1C and 1D the blocks have been reorganized, and data flows to external elements have been added, as described in the specification.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet(s) 1 through 8 of 8.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 - 5, 7, 8, 33 and 35 - 48 now stand in the application. Claims 9 - 32 are cancelled without prejudice to filing subsequent divisional applications. A new Power of Attorney, appointing the practitioners at Customer No. 26123 is enclosed under separate cover.

Applicant takes this opportunity to submit amended drawings that properly identify all the referenced elements described in the specification, and properly indicate data flow. Details of the amendments can be found at p. 8 of this response. Support for all amendments to the drawings can be found in the specification as filed.

Applicant has also made minor amendments to the specification to properly reference the Figures.

35 USC 112 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1 - 8, and 33 as being indefinite for failure to affirmatively assert 35 USC 112, sixth paragraph. Applicant has recast the claims as means for achieving the recited functions. Accordingly, Applicant has invoked 35 USC 112, sixth paragraph.

The Examiner rejected claims 2 - 6 for failure to provide sufficient structural limitations, and further rejected claim 5 for claiming a negative feature. Applicant submits that the remaining claims, as amended, are clear and definite and recite sufficient structural limitations. Claim 5 has been substantially amended to remove the negative limitation.

The Examiner rejected claim 6 as being unclear. Claim 6 has been cancelled, and the rejection thereof is now moot.

In view of the amendments, Applicant requests that the rejections under 35 USC 112 be withdrawn.

35 USC 102 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 33 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,694,359 to Morris et al. Morris describes a database management system having a distributed architecture. A retail product inventory system is exemplified. Applicant submits that Morris is unrelated to automatic discovery and inventory of hardware and software components installed on a network of computers and like devices.

By contrast, Applicant claims a component audit and inventory management system for generating an inventory of installed hardware and software components installed on target devices associated with a client, and an associated inventory agent for installation on the target devices to automatically discover the components.

In particular, claim 33 now recites a component audit and inventory management system comprising a host unit and a host message handling system. The host unit is resident in a host computer that comprises a processor, memory, and user interface. The host message handling system is operatively connected to the host unit and accessible to a data network. The host unit includes means for receiving a request-inventory message from a client computer via the host message handling system, means for generating an inventory-commence message in response to the request-inventory message, and for forwarding the inventory-commence message to the client computer via the host message handling system; means for receiving hardware and software inventory data associated with hardware and software installed on a target device associated with the client and collected electronically from the target device; and means for aggregating inventory data from a plurality of target devices associated with the client. The inventory data is collected by an inventory agent installed on the target device and activated by the inventory-commence message.

Likewise, claim 1 now recites an inventory agent for the component audit and inventory management system. The inventory agent comprises executable code for implementing a receiver, a detector and a transmitter. The receiver includes means for receiving an inventory-commence message from a client computer over a data network. The detector includes means for collecting hardware and software inventory data relating to hardware and software installed on a target device in response to commands included in the inventory-commence message; and the transmitter includes means for transmitting to a host unit of the component audit and inventory management system, through the data network, an inventory-data message including the inventory data associated with the target device.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the invention as presently claimed is patentably distinguished from Morris, and falls within a different field of art. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 USC 102(e) is requested.

35 USC 103 Rejections

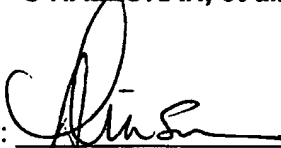
The Examiner rejected claims 1 - 8, 33 and 34 as being obvious over Morris in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,779,024 to DeLaHuerger. Claim 34 has been cancelled and the rejection thereof is now moot.

Applicant reiterates the remarks made above in connection with Morris. Similarly, DeLaHuerger describes a remote data collection system, exemplified by patient and technician data collection within a health care network. DeLaHuerger contains no suggestion or teaching of automatic discovery and inventory of hardware and software components installed on a network of computers and like devices as claimed in the present claims. Therefore, Applicant submits that the combination of Morris and DeLaHuerger would not lead one of ordinary skill in the art to the presently claimed invention, and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 USC 103(a) is requested.

No fee is believed due for this submission. However, if a fee is due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 501593, in the name of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP.

Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and favorable action to that end is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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